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CLAIMS

1. A method for charging for services in a communication system supporting a Diameter IP protocol, comprising defining at least one attribute value pair to define sponsorship information.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein there is provided an attribute value pair defining shared charging information.

3. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein there is provided an attribute value pair defining shared percentage information.

4. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein there is provided an attribute value pair defining shared amount information.

5. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein there is provided an attribute value pair defining a sponsor identity.

6. A method for charging for services in a communication system supporting a Diameter IP protocol, comprising receiving a request to establish an IP session from a user of the system; initiating an account with an account controller of the system; establishing the IP session; and initiating the monitoring of the account.

7. A method according to claim 6 wherein the step of initiating an account comprises transferring sponsorship information to a charging system, the charging system being responsible for monitoring of the account.

8. A method according to claim 7 wherein the sponsorship information is transferred from an application server.

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9. A method according to any one of claims 6 to 8 wherein the account is initiated responsive to an account request message.

10. A method according to any one of claims 6 to 9 wherein the monitoring of the account is initiated responsive to an account request message.

11. A communication system supporting a Diameter IP protocol and for charging for services, wherein the Diameter protocol is adapted to define at least one attribute value pair to define sponsorship information.

12. A communication system according to claim 11 wherein the attribute value pair defines shared charging information.

13. A communication system according to claim 11 or claim 12 wherein the attribute value pair defines shared percentage information.

14. A communication system according to any one of claims 11 to 13 wherein the attribute value pair defines shared amount information.

15. A communication system according to any one of claims 11 to 14 wherein the attribute value pair defines a sponsor identity.

16. A Diameter IP protocol adapted to define at least one attribute value pair to define sponsorship information.

17. A Diameter IP protocol according to claim 16 wherein the sponsorship information is provided to enable shared charging.

18. A communication system comprising: call control function means adapted to initiate a call session for a user of the system; an application server for providing an application for a user of the system in a call session; and a charging

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means for charging a call session for a user, wherein the call control function means, the application server and the charging means are adapted to communicate using a Diameter IP protocol.

5   19. A communication system according to claim 18 wherein the call control function means is a serving call state control function.

20. A communication system according to claim 18 or claim 19 wherein the charging means comprises an on-line charging
10   function and an off-line charging function.

21. A communication system according to any one of claims 18 to 20, wherein the charging is initiated on the basis of a Diameter IP communication between the call control function and the charging means.

15   22. A communication system according to any one of claims 18 to 21, wherein shared charging information is communicated to the charging means from the application function on the basis of a Diameter IP communication.

23. A communication system according to any one of claims 18
20   to 22, wherein the charging means monitors the call session charges responsive to a Diameter IP communication from the call control function.

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